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BATOUNIS, NICHOLAS EMANUEL. Clay Folks. (1975)  
Directed by: Mr. Walter Barker. Pp.3.

The exhibit consists of six clay figures ranging in size from thirteen to thirty inches.

This thesis was exhibited at the Weatherspoon Gallery on of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro from April 27 to May 11, 1975.

A 35 mm color transparency of each work is on file at the Walter C. Jackson Library of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

CLAY FOLKS

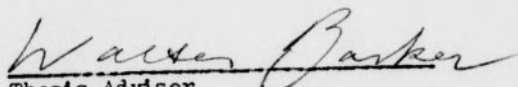
by

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A Thesis Submitted to  
the Faculty of the Graduate School at  
The University of North Carolina at Greensboro  
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of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Fine Arts

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Approved by

  
Thesis Adviser

This thesis has been approved by the following committee  
of the Faculty of the Graduate School at The University of  
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Thesis Adviser Walter Barker

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Bill Goss  
Joan Gregory  
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April 18, 1975  
Date of Acceptance by Committee

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# CATALOGUE

- |                            |             |
|----------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Ann, What's for Supper? | 21½" Height |
| 2. B.B., Seen John's Coat? | 30" Height  |
| 3. Lady in Silver          | 14" Height  |
| 4. Do Come Again           | 16½" Height |
| 5. Jeanne                  | 10" Height  |
| 6. Sleeping Fox            | 25" Length  |

All pieces are colored with pastels, acrylic, and flocking.

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Clay Folks consists of a group of clay figures ranging in size from eight to thirty inches. The figures are based upon people I have come in contact with either personally, on television, in film, or through reading. In this sense the work can be thought of as a form of commentary, for the figures are a part of my inner world.

In my recent work I have sought to combine certain environmental ideas with the figures. Though the idea of the environment is an ancient concept, it is one that has been continually reworked up to the present. In my own work, the purpose for using objects in conjunction with the figure is to aid in creating a specific mood for the figure involved.

The exhibit will primarily focus on the female figure, mainly because of a personal preference for it. The structure of the female seems to lend itself better to the manner in which the pieces are constructed. The female can be thought of as a triangle, large hips and narrow shoulders, with a general reduction in size as one moves up. The male, however, possesses smaller hips and broader shoulders resembling an inverted triangle. My own work reflects the female structure, because of the figures' large hips and thighs and their tapering in size as the piece progresses towards the top.

The work represents a personal learning process; each piece is a little different. Variations are made with each figure, whether or not I am conscious of it at the time. The work is not

only a reflection of others, but of myself. My preference for a partially clothed figure, rather than a totally draped or nude figure, is evident in the work. The women all have some form of garment on: a gown, a garter. I feel that garments, such as a robe, can be very suggestive and sensuous. For me a nude figure has no mystery; when clothes are added to the figure, one begins to wonder what is concealed. For example, the work of Lautrec is very suggestive, and almost never obscene. His figures done in the brothel are usually clothed to some degree. His work depicts the individual in his or her own environment, and, in doing so, Lautrec projects a certain feeling. Similarly, in my own work, I hope to project my inner feelings to the viewer, and to create the sensation that he or she has startled the figure. Who knows, even a conversation might arise between the two!

Through the introduction of color, whether it be pastel, paint, or flocking, I have attempted to create a specific personality than the raw clay.

Technically, the figures are constructed from the feet up. The process used is the same as if one were constructing a slab-built pot. The size of the piece and the flexibility of the clay determine the speed with which the initial form can be constructed. If one rushes in assembling the piece, it is likely that it will not be able to support its own weight.

Until recently, I attempted to complete the piece in stages; because of this, certain distortions such as the over sized feet become almost comic. Now, however, I am trying to keep the piece



just dry enough to support itself, yet wet enough to be able to rework it. The distortions still exist, but they are more controlled. This newer approach also seems to lend itself to the creation of a more sensual mood lacking in the earlier work.